to some constraints, the commissioning of the project have so far been delayed by six years; if so, what are these projects and the reasons for their delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b) The main reasons for delay include financial constrants, cost escalation, inadequate investigations at the project formulation stage, difficulties in land acquisition and non-availability of forest land and building materials at times. These have been resulting in overall cost escalation of projects.

(c) The State Governments have been advised to priorities the projects for optimal allocation of available resources and lay stress on completion of ongoing projects.

(d) The commissioning of Sindh Phase-I and Rangwan HLC have been delayed by about six years due to financial constraints, non-transfer of forest land to the Irrigation Department, as also change in the scope of the project.

Gold Deposits of Goans in Portugese Bank

1157. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of families in Goa who had deposited gold ornaments worth crores as security in Portugese Bank before the liberation of Goa will be getting them back soon;

(b) if so, whether Portugal Bank has agreed to disburse the amounts and ornaments to the families of those who had deposited the same;

(c) if so, what is the total number of families whose gold was deposited at the Portugal Bank and whether all the families have been assured that the gold ornaments will be returned to them; and

(d) what are the arrangements to be made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) A large number of persons in Goa had deposited gold ornaments as security for loans with the Portuguese Bank (Banco Nacional Ultra Marino). The question of return of these ornaments and other securities has been taken up with the Portuguese Government through diplomatic channels. An official indication about the return of these ornaments and securities is awaited from the Portuguese side.

(c) and (d) While information about the total number of families is not available, it is estimated that loans advanced against these ornaments relate to 6531 accounts. The question of return of the gold to the families is dependent upon the decision of the Portuguese Government.

Strategy to Build Indian Navy

1158. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a part of strategy to build up a Blue Water Navy capable of projecting India's power beyond Indian shores Government plans to purchase a second aircraft carrier for the Navy;

(b) whether it is a fact that India is the tenth largest naval power in the World;

(c) if so, whether Govt. plans to consolidate its current position;

(d) whether any such scheme for improving the position in regard to the naval strength is being prepared;

(e) if so, the details of the programme; and

(f) to what extent the strength of the Indian navy will be strengthened?